

Greatest Of All Times

108

**G
O
A
T**

**Globally selected
PERSONALITIES**

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH THE VIRUS
DOES NOT MEAN GOING BACK TO LIFE AS
WE KNEW IT. THAT WOULD BE
BEFRIENDING THE VIRUS AND ALLOWING
IT TO CONTINUE DEVASTATING LIFE,
HEALTH AND ECONOMY.

H.E DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
28 AUGUST 2020



3 Aug 1941 <::><::><::> 4 Feb 2024

Compiled by:
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3 Aug 1941



4 Feb 2024

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hage_Geingob

His Excellency
Hage Geingob



Geingob in 2023

3rd [President of Namibia](#)

In office

21 March 2015 – 4 February 2024

**Prime
Minister**

[Saara Kuugongelwa](#)

**Vice
President**

[Nickey Iyambo](#) (2015–2018)
[Nangolo Mbumba](#) (2018–2024)

Preceded by

[Hifikepunye Pohamba](#)

**Succeeded
by**

[Nangolo Mbumba](#)

[President of SWAPO](#)

In office

26 November 2017 – 4 February 2024

Preceded by

[Hifikepunye Pohamba](#)

[Prime Minister of Namibia](#)

<p>In office 4 December 2012 – 20 March 2015</p>	
President	Hifikepunye Pohamba
Deputy	Marco Hausiku
Preceded by	Nahas Angula
Succeeded by	Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila
<p>In office 21 March 1990 – 28 August 2002</p>	
President	Sam Nujoma
Deputy	Hendrik Witbooi
Preceded by	Position established
Succeeded by	Theo-Ben Gurirab
Minister of Trade and Industry	
<p>In office 8 April 2008 – 4 December 2012</p>	
Prime Minister	Nahas Angula
Preceded by	Immanuel Ngatjizeko
Succeeded by	Calle Schlettwein
Member of the National Assembly of Namibia	
<p>In office 21 March 1990 – 21 March 2015</p>	
Preceded by	<i>Office established</i>
Member of the Constituent Assembly of Namibia	
<p>In office 1989 – 21 March 1990</p>	
Preceded by	<i>Office established</i>
Succeeded by	<i>Constituent Assembly replaced with National Assembly</i>
Personal details	
Born	3 August 1941 Otjiwarongo , South West Africa (present-day Namibia)
Died	4 February 2024 (aged 82) Windhoek , Namibia
Resting place	Heroes' Acre (Namibia)
Nationality	Namibian
Political party	SWAPO

Spouses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priscilla "Patty" Geingos (m. 1967; div. 1992) • Loini Kandume (m. 1992; div. 2008) • Monica Kalondo (m. 2015)
Children	5
Residence	Casa Rosalia
<u>Alma mater</u>	Temple University Fordham University (BA) The New School (MA) University of Leeds (PhD)
Occupation	Politician
Awards	Hon

Hage Gottfried Geingob (3 August 1941 – 4 February 2024) was a Namibian politician who served as the third president of Namibia from 2015 until his death in February 2024. Geingob was the first prime minister of Namibia from 1990 to 2002, and served again from 2012 to 2015.^[1] Between 2008 and 2012 Geingob served as Minister of Trade and Industry.^[1] In November 2014, Geingob was elected president of Namibia by an overwhelming margin. In November 2017, Geingob became the third president of the ruling SWAPO Party after winning by a large margin at the party's sixth Congress. He served as the party's president until his death. In August 2018, Geingob began a one-year term as chairperson of the Southern African Development Community.

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https://www.parliament.na/dt_team/geingob-hage/



Prime Minister

SWAPO Party

Legislative Profile

Chairman of the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Namibia 1990; First Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia 1990 – 2002; Chief Whip of SWAPO Party (National Assembly) 2007 – 2008; Vice President of South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) since 2005; Minister of Trade and Industry 2008 – 2012; Prime Minister since 2012

Personal

Born on 3 August 1941 at Otjiwarongo, Otjozondjupa Region

Education

Augustineum Training College 1958 – 1961; Fordham University (New York) 1964 – 1970; Graduate Faculty of the New School, New York (MA in International Relations) 1971 – 1974; Awarded the Palmes Academiques (Officer Class) by the French Government in Recognition of Valuable Service in Education 1980; Awarded Ongulumbashe Medal (SWAPO) for Bravery and Long Service 1987; Awarded LL.D Honoris Causa by Colombia College Illinois, Awarded the Second Highest Order on Cuba – Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Awarded the Order of the Sun 1st Class for Outstanding Political Leadership by the Namibian Government 1994; Awarded LL.D (Doctorate of Laws) Honoris Causa by the University of Namibia 1997; Awarded LL.D (Doctorate of Laws) Honoris Causa by the University of Delhi, India 1995; Awarded Doctorate of Humane Letters (Honoris Causa) by the American University of Rome 1998; Ph.D. from University of Leeds 2004 University of Leeds; Awarded the Crans Montana Forum's Prix de la Foundation for Exceptional Leadership 2012;

Career

Assistant SWAPO Representative in Botswana 1963 – 1964; SWAPO Representative at the United Nations & the Americas 1964 – 1971; Political Affairs Officer, UN Secretariat 1971 – 1975; SWAPO Party's Director of Elections 1989; Chairman of the 14th Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme

Interests

Kindly visit the following Web Links

- 7th National Assembly: 2020 – 2025
- 6th National Assembly: 2015 – 2020
- 5th National Assembly: 2010 – 2015
- 4th National Assembly: 2005 – 2010
- 3rd National Assembly: 2000 – 2005
- 2nd National Assembly: 1995 – 2000
- 1st National Assembly: 1990 – 1995
- Constituent Assembly: 1989 – 1990

- 6th National Council: 2020 – 2025
- 5th National Council: 2015 – 2020
- 4th National Council: 2010 – 2015
- 3rd National Council: 2004 – 2010
- 2nd National Council: 1998 – 2004
- 1st National Council: 1993 – 1998

- Overview
- History
- How is a Law Made
- Frequently Asked Questions
 - Namibia Fact File
 - Glossary
 - Flyers



US President's Message

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/02/04/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-the-passing-of-namibian-president-hage-geingob/>

February 04, 2024

Statement from President Joe Biden on the Passing of Namibian President Hage Geingob

Jill and I offer our deepest condolences to First Lady Monica Geingos and the rest of the Namibian people on the loss of President Hage Geingob.

President Geingob was a fearless leader, fighting for independence, overseeing the drafting of the new nation's constitution, and serving his country twice as prime minister and finally as president. He was an eloquent advocate for his country and continent, who stood up for his values and beliefs. We will continue to build on his legacy, strengthening our partnerships and shared vision for deeper mutual support.

Throughout his life, he maintained close ties to the United States and the American people. From studying at Temple University in Philadelphia and at both Fordham University and The New School in New York, President Geingob believed in the enduring ties between the people of our two great nations. I will miss working with him.

We look forward to continuing to strengthen our relationship with Namibia, honoring President Geingob's legacy and vision for his country and people.



Geingob receives historic award at COP 28

<https://www.observer24.com.na/geingob-receives-historic-award-at-cop-28/>



Niël Terblanché

President Hage Geingob was honoured as the recipient of the highly acclaimed African Presidential Green Infrastructure Investment Statesman of the Year during a momentous ceremony held at COP 28 in Dubai.

President Geingob's remarkable contributions to the field of Green Infrastructure Investment have earned him this distinguished recognition, making him only the second recipient of the award since its inception in 2022.

The award was presented to President Geingob during the COP28 Africa Investment Earthshot Leaders' Summit and NDC Investment Award.

The gathering celebrated excellence in environmental leadership and sustainable development.

The event was organized by Africa Investor (AI) and sponsored by the Africa Green Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Before receiving the prestigious accolade, President Geingob delivered an address at the Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge, where he engaged with participants on critical issues related to climate change and sustainable development.

In his speech, he posed a rhetorical question, highlighting Namibia's dedication to the goals of Agenda 2063.

"Imagine being in a country that has discovered large quantities of oil. Yet, the same country is making huge investments in green hydrogen as part of its efforts to fight climate change. What would you do?" he asked of the participants.

He said that Namibia's alignment with Agenda 2063, known as "The Africa We Want," accentuates the nation's commitment to collective action in addressing climate change and ensuring sustainable development across the continent.

President Geingob stressed the fundamental role renewable energy will play in realizing Agenda 2063's ambitions.

In his address, he outlined Namibia's vision of becoming a hub for renewable energy innovation, driving green industrialization that creates jobs, fosters economic development, and ensures energy access for all.

"The country is currently spearheading nine different green hydrogen projects that aim to produce clean molecules using renewable energy, ultimately decarbonizing sectors such as transport and agriculture while fostering new industries," he said.

Namibia's ambitious plan entails deploying more than ten gigawatts of renewables over the next two decades, a significant leap from its current generation capacity.

The President said that Namibia also possesses valuable lithium and rare earth elements, which are essential for the energy transition, and is exploring ways to manufacture battery precursors domestically while harnessing additional renewable energy sources.

“The realization of this vision will require substantial infrastructure development, including ports, roads, railways, transmission lines, and pipelines for water and hydrogen,” he said.

President Geingob reiterated that green industrialization not only serves as an economic imperative but also paves the way for environmental sustainability and social equity.

“Namibia extends an open invitation to collaborate, share knowledge, and form partnerships to accelerate the adoption of renewable energy technologies throughout the African continent,” he said.

President Geingob’s receipt of the African Presidential Green Infrastructure Investment Statesman of the Year Award stands as a testament to Namibia’s unwavering commitment to sustainable development and green innovation.

“Namibia stands ready to lead the way and inspire collective efforts in the pursuit of a greener, more sustainable Africa,” he said.

Another honour was bestowed on President Geingob when he was requested to officially christen the Fortescue Green Pioneer, the world’s first vessel to be powered by Green Ammonia, at COP28.

Green Ammonia, a carbon-free alternative to fossil fuels, is set to revolutionize the global shipping industry and play a substantial role in decarbonisation efforts to combat climate change.



Geingob and US President Joe Biden at the United States–Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, December 2022

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President Geingob posthumously honoured with Cuba's highest AWARD

<https://www.observer24.com.na/president-geingob-posthumously-honoured-with-cubas-highest-award/>



Niël Terblanché

In a touching ceremony that emphasized the deep ties between Namibia and Cuba, the late President Hage Geingob was posthumously awarded the prestigious José Martí Order, Cuba's highest national honour.

The award was bestowed by the President of the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba, Esteban Lazo Hernández, and received by Monica Geingos, the former First Lady of Namibia

Bestowing the award marked a significant moment of international recognition for the departed Namibian leader's contributions to democracy, peace, and justice.

The announcement of this honour took place on 26 August 2023, during the commemoration of Namibia's Heroes Day, where the President of the Republic of Cuba served as the special guest of honour.

The gesture of posthumous recognition highlights the esteemed regard in which President Geingob is held internationally, reflecting his dedication to fostering strong international relations and his commitment to the principles of peace and justice.

Christine //Hoebes, the Minister in the Presidency, expressed Namibia's gratitude and pride in accepting the José Martí Order on behalf of President Geingob.

She stated that the honour is a testament to President Geingob's enduring legacy, celebrating his relentless pursuit of democracy, his efforts in promoting peace both domestically and internationally, and his unwavering commitment to justice for all.

The Order of José Martí, named after the Cuban national hero and an emblem of the country's struggle for independence, is reserved for individuals who have made significant contributions to the cause of peace and human dignity.

President Geingob, now the second Namibian leader to receive this distinguished award, is remembered for his role in strengthening the bonds between Namibia and Cuba, and his broader impact on the international stage. The ceremony at State House, held following the burial service of the late leader, saw President Esteban Lazo Hernández personally delivering the award to Monica Geingos.

The moment not only served as a tribute to President Geingob's remarkable contributions but also as a reminder of the lasting

friendships forged through shared values and mutual respect among nations.

As Namibia and the international community continue to honour the legacy of President Geingob, the awarding of the José Martí Order stands as a reflective acknowledgement of his life's work towards creating a more just and peaceful world.

His vision and achievements will continue to inspire and resonate and will echo through the corridors of history and Namibia's ongoing journey towards global solidarity and understanding.



Hage Geingob Campus

<https://www.unam.edu.na/hage-geingob-campus>

Introduction

Based in Windhoek, the campus is home to four schools: the School of Allied Health Sciences, School of Dentistry, School of Medicine, and School of Pharmacy. Be part of a Campus with an exceptional reputation for developing the world's finest health sciences professionals addressing issues affecting our communities.

Health Science is the crown jewel in Academia. The Campus is housing the Faculty of Health Sciences. It is truly a state-of-the-art Campus on so many levels and thus very appealing to many a student. Initial impressions create a feeling of being in the heart of suburbia, but closer inspection reveals a true metropolis. Rich with beautiful lawns and state-of-the-art technology, it is a Campus way ahead of its time.

Facilities & Stats

Home to a student population of more than 1100 students, the campus provides ambient space for studying, by offering students various lecture halls, rooms and laboratories to either read or do practicals.

Although relatively new, the Library is exclusively for health sciences students and boasts some of the latest books in various fields of health. Wi-Fi internet connection is available in all buildings and open spaces.

The Campus has a state-of-the-art heated indoor pool with a motivating gym space. In terms of security, all venues are fitted with biometric scanners and with state-of-the-art technology teaching aids. Within the Life Science Building I, you will find a museum with various health specimens that relate to anatomy, surgery and general medicine.

Other facilities include a cafeteria, kiosk, open lawns and a 180-room hostel facility.

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Important

INFO

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hage_Geingob

Legacy

[Hage Geingob Rugby Stadium](#), [Hage G. Geingob High School](#) and the [University of Namibia](#)'s Medical School Campus both in Windhoek are named after him.

Dr. Hage G. Geingob was honored with a Heroes Funeral on the 25th of February 2024 and was laid to rest at the [Heroes' Acre \(Namibia\)](#).

On the 3rd of August, what would have been Hage's 83rd Birthday, The [President of Namibia Nangolo Mbumba](#) named the B6 Highway after the Late: Dr. Hage Geingob Freeway.

Awards, honors, and recognition

- In 1980, awarded the [Palmes académiques](#) (Officer Class) by the French Government in recognition of valuable services in education.
- In 1987, awarded [Omugulugwombashe Medal](#) (SWAPO) for bravery and long service.
- In 1994, awarded [LL.D. Honoris Causa](#) by [Columbia College, Illinois](#).
- In 1994, awarded the second highest order in [Cuba](#), [Carlos Manuel de Céspedes](#).
- In 1994, awarded the [Order of the Sun](#), 1st Class by the Government of Namibia for providing outstanding political leadership.

- In 1995, awarded LL.D. (Doctorate of Laws) Honoris Causa by the [University of Delhi](#), India.
- In 1997, awarded LL.D. (Doctorate of Laws) Honoris Causa by the [University of Namibia](#).
- In 1998, awarded a Doctorate of Humane Letters (Honoris Causa) by [The American University of Rome](#).
- In 2001, a new school aimed at educating deprived children was opened in [Katutura](#) and named after the president. The [Hage G. Geingob High School](#) educates many from the [informal settlements](#) around [Windhoek](#).
- In 2015, was conferred the [Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis](#) by then-President [Hifikepunye Pohamba](#), upon Geingob inauguration as Namibia's third President on 21 March 2015

Research activities and publications

Hage Geingob received his [Ph.D.](#) from the [University of Leeds](#). His thesis was entitled "State Formation in Namibia: Promoting Democracy and Good Governance". In his thesis, he examined significant events in the formation of Namibia and provided insight into the role played by various actors involved in molding Namibia's evolution as a state. He also examined the efforts of Namibians to build a society out of diverse and stratified racial and ethnic groups that were often opposed to each other, to promote democracy and a policy of reconciliation, to improve the condition of the previously disadvantaged groups through [affirmative action](#), to encourage good [governance](#), to promote a culture that respects [human rights](#), and to build state institutions that support these policies. Finally, he carried out a democratic audit of Namibia.

As the director of the Institute for Namibia and as the chairman of the Research Coordinating Committee, Hage Geingob oversaw all research activities at the United Nations Institute for Namibia. The result of this effort resulted in 22 published research studies.

Geingob was also the chairman of the most comprehensive study ever undertaken on Namibia, *Namibia: Perspectives for National Reconstruction and Development*, which was undertaken by the United Nations Institute for Namibia in pursuance of the mandate given to it by the [United Nations General Assembly](#). This study covered all aspects of socio-economic reconstruction and development for independent Namibia. This study came to be known as the "Blue Bible", referring to the color of its cover, among the researchers and planners of Namibia. Indeed, this study provided the blueprint for setting up the new government in independent Namibia.

In addition, Geingob contributed numerous articles to various publications, including [monographs](#), [periodicals](#), and [newspapers](#).

Geingob traveled extensively covering all the continents and attended, chaired, and presented papers at numerous UN and other international conferences. He also regularly attended the General Assembly sessions from 1965 to 1985.



UN Secretary-General's Remarks

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2024-02-07/secretary-generals-remarks-the-general-assembly-tribute-his-excellency-mr-hage-geingob-president-of-namibia-delivered>

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we come together to mourn the passing of Dr. Hage Gottfried Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia.

President Geingob was a man with a remarkable presence, and a remarkable ability to connect with everyone he met.

I want to extend my sincere condolences to his family, and to the Government and people of Namibia.

The United Nations stands with you in sorrow.

Excellencies,

It is no exaggeration to say that President Geingob dedicated his life to his country:

Many of us will never forget the image of him kissing the Namibian ground on his return, after years in exile.

From his early years of activism during Namibia's independence struggle and against the rank cruelty of apartheid;

To his leading role creating the Namibian constitution – which has equality and human rights at its heart;

And, of course, his years of service first as Prime Minister and then as President.

Namibia shaped him. And he shaped Namibia.

He promoted gender equality, championed clean energy, and was a strong ally of international solidarity embodied here in the United Nations.

The tributes from his fellow African leaders hail him as an icon of liberation, and a powerful voice for Africa, and African unity.

Excellencies,

Democracy, self-determination, and human rights for all, animated the life and work of President Geingob.

Today, these values are under attack.

Around the world, international law is being flouted.

Human rights are being trampled.

Authoritarianism is on the rise.

And inequality is rife.

As we pay tribute to the memory of President Geingob, let us commit to honouring the values that he stood for.

By fighting racism, misogyny and injustice.

By standing up for human rights.

And by working to build a more equal world, in which no one is left behind.

Excellencies,

At this difficult time, I offer my solidarity and warmest wishes to the people of Namibia, and President Geingob's family.

I think particularly of his wife, Mrs. Monica Geingos, an advocate for youth inclusion and leadership, who has been a strong presence here at the United Nations over the years;

And of Namibia's new President, Nangolo Mbumba, who now leads a
grieving nation.

The United Nations will continue its strong friendship with Namibia as we work to build a more equal world for all. A world of dignity, and human rights.

And we will do so inspired by the memory of President Geingob, a man with a warm laugh, a sharp mind, and a strong heart.

Thank you.

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United Nations

UN Deputy Secretary-General

@ **Memorial Service**

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/dsgsm1892.doc.htm>

President Geingob Dedicated His Life to Liberating Namibia, Serving Its People, Says Deputy Secretary-General, at Memorial Service

Following is UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed's message on the occasion of the memorial service for President Hage G. Geingob of Namibia, in Windhoek today:

On behalf of the Secretary-General and the United Nations, it is truly an honour to be able to join you today to mourn the passing and celebrate the life of a husband, father, friend, grandfather, veteran of the anti-colonial struggle and visionary leader: President Hage Geingob.

I saw firsthand those struggles and the gains at the celebration of Namibia's independence as a young Nigerian and appreciated that after years of brutal colonial rule and the wickedness of apartheid. It was a momentous occasion. Freedom won at great cost. But to see that Namibian flag raised was truly remarkable.

President Geingob dedicated his life to liberating his country and serving the people of Namibia. And he is central to this country's recent history. From the humble beginnings of a teacher to his participation in the struggle for independence, to his long service as both Prime Minister and President.

President Geingob was a man of strong principles. But these were not mere theoretical positions. They were fierce beliefs that he devoted his life to: From leading the strikes for the rights of students, to ensuring the voice of SWAPO at the United Nations and dismantling an apartheid administration as Prime Minister. A disciple of human rights — who was central to drafting the Namibian Constitution, which has them at its heart.

He was an advocate of the Sustainable Development Goals — including climate action — he championed this country's trailblazing green hydrogen projects; a strong believer in women's rights who promoted women in public life; and a proud African and multilateralist whose presence was strongly felt at the United Nations and who advocated for our continent on the world stage.

All of us best honour his memory by following his example and continuing his work. By championing the principles he lived by: Anti-racism, justice, democracy, solidarity and human rights for everyone. And dedicating ourselves to putting them into effect and building on this strong foundation.

President Geingob leaves a gaping hole in many lives and in the hearts of Namibians. But he has also left a rich bank of wisdom and memories that we can all hold on to and build.

On behalf of the United Nations, our sincere condolences once again to the people of Namibia, the Government and to President Geingob's family. But particularly to my sister, Monica Geingos, who has long been a friend in the fight for economic justice, health rights, and an ally to the voice of youth in Namibia and beyond.

President Geingob, to you I say, we will always cherish the memory of a gentle giant with a wonderful warmth, an exceptional sense of humour. At the last General Assembly, we joked that I had more grandchildren than he did.

But he had most of all a burning commitment to a better world for everyone. May your soul rest in perfect peace. And may you soar high on the wings of angels.



Kindly visit these Videos

[01] Memorial service of the late Namibian president Hage G. Geingob [7:48:10]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGikzuENTw4>

[02] Funeral Service of the late Namibian President Hage G. Geingob [4:48:55]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3O9MfujKGU8>

[03] BURIAL | Dr HAGE G. GEINGOB | 25 FEBRUARY 2024 [6:42:35]

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=1798208530604460

[04] Remembrance Ceremony of Dr. Hage G. Geingob

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=420720180982943

[05] Did the Late President Hage Geingob Fulfill His Promises [1:11:23]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPPSWnKO7po>

[06] Parliament Of Namibia: Tribute to late President Hage Geingob [3:09:16]

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=1538877900292075

Namibia after President Hage Geingob (1941-2024)

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00358533.2024.2333203>

Author

Henning Melber

Associate, Nordic Africa Institute, Stockholm, Sweden;
Extraordinary Professor, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

On 4 February 2024, Namibia's President Hage Geingob lost his short battle with cancer. His second five-year term in office would have ended on 21 March 2024. Following Sam Nujoma (1990-2005) and Hifikepunye Pohamba (2005-2015) as third Head of State, he was the first of the veterans to depart from this world. A member of the first 'struggle generation', he nevertheless was an 'outlier'. He represented the liberation movement SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) from the mid-1960s at the United Nations while also studying Political Sciences, obtaining a BA at Fordham University and an MA at The New School. In 2004, he added a PhD at the University of Leeds to his academic credentials with a thesis on state formation in Namibia. From 1975 onwards, he was the only Director of the United Nations Institute for Namibia in Lusaka. In mid-1989, he returned from exile during the transition to independence under UN supervision, overseeing SWAPO's election campaign. He chaired the elected Constituent Assembly and was largely responsible for the adoption of the normative framework in February 1990 as the last step to Independence (21 March 1990).

He was the first Prime Minister until 2002. Refusing to support President Sam Nujoma's campaign for an extension of the latter's presidency beyond the constitutional term limits, he fell into oblivion. Declining a demotion to the rank of an insignificant minister, he accepted the headship of the World Bank's Global Coalition for Africa in Washington. This detour in his political career was most likely a decisive step in upholding Namibia's constitutional principles, as Nujoma finally decided to retire in 2005. Geingob returned as a backbencher of SWAPO to the National Assembly in 2004. Nujoma's successor, Hifikepunye Pohamba, welcomed him back to the party leadership, appointed him as Minister of Trade and Industry and as from 2012 again as Prime Minister. Nominated SWAPO's

candidate for the presidential elections in 2014, he secured a record result of 86% of votes.

In his inaugural address, he introduced the metaphor of the Namibian House:

All of us must play our part in the success of this beautiful house we call Namibia. We need to renew it from time to time by undergoing renovations and extensions. ... Let us stand together in building this new Namibian house in which no Namibian will feel left out.

This turned him into a president of unfulfilled promises. Statistically with an annual per capita income of close to US\$ 10000 a higher-middle-income-country, Namibia is one of the most unequal societies, with half the population living in or near poverty. Many felt left out, and his declared crusade against corruption did not show any convincing results.

Geingob treasured the Constitution, calling it a 'living document'. Civil liberties as the guiding principles of political culture and governance allow for freedom of speech and association. Since Independence, not a single politically motivated killing is on record. Disliking criticism, as an ardent football fan he demanded 'play the ball and not the man'. But he proudly bragged about Namibia's media freedom: in the 2023 World Press Freedom Index its rank, 21, was the highest in Africa - only one place behind Germany, outscoring the UK at rank 26 and the USA on 45. As Gwen Lister, founder of the newspaper *The Namibian* stated on X: 'Our late President didn't always have a love affair with media, nor they with him, but his consistent support for press freedom solidified our democracy. Kudos!'

Geingob left behind a governance structure, which secured a smooth transition. As Toivo Ndjebela, editor of the *Namibian Sun*, on the sad day of the President's departure observed in a post on X: 'No military personnel on the streets. No tanks. No metal helmets. No gunshots. No smoke wallowing from anywhere. Seamless transition. Just like President Geingob would have wanted. I'm sad but also incredibly proud of our country today'.

Nangolo Mbumba, Vice-President since 2018 and Geingob's age, was sworn in as Geingob's successor the same day. 'Don't panic', he declared at his inauguration - 'I am not going to be around for the elections'. These take place in November 2024 for the National Assembly and the President, with terms starting on 21 March 2025. Until then, Mbumba is tasked to be the caretaker. He had negotiated the integration of the Walvis Bay enclave to Namibia in the early 1990s, served as minister in various portfolios (including seven years as Minister of Finance) and was SWAPO's Secretary-General between 2012 and 2017. 'The rule of law is essential in the preservation and advancement of our democracy',

he declared during his first days in office. He promised 'to reaffirm, as our late president did during his tenure, the doctrine of the separation of powers'. As a long-time fellow traveller of Geingob, he will remain loyal to the deceased's credo.

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Three Tributes

<https://medium.com/@DolapoAina/president-hage-geingob-three-tributes-to-the-great-namibian-pan-african-leader-f5d28c4268d4>



President Hage Gottfried Geingob of Namibia

My pieces on Namibia have become long-reads and this piece is not an exception.

When great men and women pass away, you pretty much remember with clarity where you were when you heard the news. Same goes for monumental historical events. You would recollect and not forget where you were or what you were up to. Sunday, the 4th of February 2024 was one of those days for Namibians, friends of Namibia and Namibians, Africa and the entire world. So, where were you when you heard about the death of President Hage G. Geingob of Namibia on February 4th, 2024?

Several tributes have poured in and have been made about President Hage G. Geingob and several of these tributes stand out. This long-read has two of those brilliant tributes. One by the former First Lady Mrs. Monica Geingos and Dr. Alfredo Hengari.



Dr Alfredo Tjiurimo Hengari.

**Tribute by Dr. Alfredo Tjiurimo Hengari on behalf of the Private Office on
the Occasion of the Memorial Service for The Presidency in honour of
President Hage G. Geingob**

I. Prologue

I am humbled to have been accorded the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Private Office in The Presidency about the third President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob. I also feel the unbearable weight of the task. In his melancholic poem, "Solo La Muerte" , which translates into English as "Only Death", the 1971 Nobel Prize in Literature and controversial Chilean activist, but elegant poet, Pablo Neruda, says the following about death in the two stanzas that we have selected: "Death arrives at the sonorous point, Like a shoe without a foot, like a suit without the man in it...I don't know, I am familiar with so little, I can hardly see, but I believe that its song has the colour of damp violets; of violets used to the earth. Because the face of death is green, and the look of death is green. With the sharp dampness of a leaf of violet and the exasperated wintry colour of the grave."

The poem by the celebrated Neruda reminds us that as a nation, we are abruptly coping with the stark and painful reality of having lost to death, one of the finest and best amongst us. We are under unbearable pain and defeat because as Neruda says, "death arrives at the sonorous point, like a shoe without afoot". We are inconsolable. We don't even know if President Geingob would have found the vocabulary to console us. In fact, he struggled with words to console when visiting bereaved families. Madame Geingos has many anecdotes to that effect and I recall how President Geingob told a grieving widow, "Unfortunately death is reserved for all of us, we have to be strong." During this hour of grief, as advisors, executive directors, students, aides and staff members under the watchful eye of President Geingob — even during this darkest hour — we are compelled to celebrate not only a brave and iconic leader of the people of our land, but our teacher and our Boss. To some in the Private Office, he was Hefe — to others he was President.

We are here as witnesses to add to the puzzle in the life of an extraordinary and exemplary servant of the Namibian people, and humanity at large. We are witnesses in the Private Office to the life of a skilled politician who graced global corridors of power and the vast expanse of our land with a sense of mission and gravitas. Yes, you could feel his infectious passion and affection for ordinary Namibians when he interacted with them. Yes, you could feel his infectious passion for Namibians when he fought for their interests in global fora. A Pan-Africanist, yes, you could feel the infectious passion of President Geingob for the African continent and Africans in the diaspora.

For a country which pursues small-state diplomacy, President Hage G. Geingob played an outsized role in shaping the agenda of peace in Africa and the furtherance of the ideals of solidarity and justice for humanity at large. As Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community in 2018, he marshalled with panache difficult dossiers on the Democratic Republic of Congo and shared solutions among conflicting parties with his trademark pragmatic and calm rationality. Unquestionably, President Geingob was cut out for the ethical path of life that he walked with integrity, urgency and untold grace in fulfilment of the independence of our country and the formidable, but attainable mission of prosperity for all Namibians.

II. The Dr. Hage G. Geingob Method

Fellow Mourners; I recall the occasion of the 70th birthday of Dr. Hage G. Geingob in August 2011, when the late Honourable Theo-Ben Gurirab was asked to deliver remarks about Dr. Geingob where he said: "Hage is that difficult, but kind uncle". Judging from his facial expression, our boss was not pleased with the first part. I suspect that he would have preferred the word "demanding" or "perfectionist" instead of "difficult". A vertical, but also a horizontal leader, many of us experienced the

demanding and perfectionist side of President Geingob. Intolerance for explanations when the work is not done; Intolerance for sloppy work; Intolerance for blame shifting, which to him demonstrated the absence of loyalty and “taking one” for the team. To say that I am not the one who is delaying this or that document was enough to annoy him. All of us received his legendary hair-dryer treatment in his office or at the Round-Table, a lieu he adored so much. We would spend hours on concepts and doctrines such as the Three Waves of African Leadership; Transparency plus Accountability equals Trust and others. As part of his deeply held wish for an inclusive Namibia, President Geingob would emphasize the eradication of tribalism, racism and all other forms of division. An agile multi-tasker, President Geingob would talk syntax, grammar and why the sentence construction in a text is wrong.

A State of the Nation Address could go through his hand 11 times, with questions around arguments, facts and mistakes meticulously underlined. President Geingob was affable and could walk into our offices, sit down to follow up on tasks and just to chat about this or that issue. For President Geingob, work was not just work or a heavy burden to carry — it was part of his *raison d’être* in service of others. It is why President Geingob worked with so much Intensity and expected those around him to do the same. A force of nature, President Geingob had high-pitched standards. He was proud to say that as a teacher he used to be strict in marking. True, working with him felt as if 90% of our performance did not count for much — we only had 10% in which we could get 10 out of 10 to deserve praise. When he had assigned you a task, since he was a fast-thinker you needed to be ready for the follow-up questions. However, when the work was executed properly, he was extremely generous in praise. That is the hallmark of a top leader, a great teacher and affable mentor.

III. Epilogue

Fellow Mourners, you may ask why we chose a Chilean poet to accompany our tribute. We chose Pablo Neruda because he believed in “a poetry of bread, where everyone may eat” . Neruda also gives the colour green to the face of death, which imposes optimism and guides us to the lessons of regeneration that we must draw from our interactions with President Geingob. Throughout his four lives; First, as a Teacher in Tsumeb, second, as a SWAPO Freedom Fighter in exile, third, as Chairperson of the Constituent Assembly and Founding Prime Minister; and fourth as President of the Republic of Namibia, President Geingob was animated by the emancipation, the unity and the development of the Namibian and African people. When he said in his 2015 acceptance speech that we must eradicate poverty, he meant it. In fact, to deeply believe and to work hard as President Geingob did to ensure that no one should feel left out speaks to the kindness and generosity of his spirit and soul.

Many of us in the Office served as his emissaries to give on his behalf assistance to this or that person in distress; we received calls from him about his concern for this or that person who was unwell or in hospital and that he needed to visit. We bore witness to his sense of leadership based on concert with the Vice President, H.E Dr. Nangolo Mbumba, the Prime Minister, Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila and Deputy Prime Minister Honourable Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, including other members of the executive and the SWAPO Party Top Four.

There was an eternal tone about President Geingob. In addition to the pursuit of excellence, the most valuable lesson we should draw from the life of President Hage G. Geingob is to care for the weak, the vulnerable, those without a voice and those without means.

Anecdote

[I recall on one occasion when we returned from the inauguration of President Yoweri Kagame Museveni in 2021 and he decided to land in Grootfontein in order to go to his farm, Hadaloha. Upon landing at Grootfontein, the Presidential Falcon was hit by a bird and could not proceed to Windhoek. The remaining members of the delegation needed to be lodged in Tsumeb. True to his sense of duty towards others, President Geingob called me to find out if everyone was settled and had found accommodation; I said to him, yes Honourable Yvonne Dausab and Tom Alweendo are accommodated at Kupferquelle Lodge. Irritated with my response, the President said to me that what I had just shared was not the full picture — “You are only telling me about Ministers, what about Mercia, the photographer and Thomas, my bodyguard?”

This is just one of many examples that goes on to demonstrate his humanity and watchful eye over the interests of each and everyone. Certainly, the Geingob heritage is a rich bouquet of enduring values that he shared with all of us through his acts of kindness. Many of you out there may have grown to appreciate a President of the people, an astute politician, a champion of effective governance and a statesman. But in Dr. Hage G. Geingob, we have grown to be fond and to love the human being even more.

We conclude with one of the favourite verses of President Geingob from The Bible during periods of mourning a loved one. Psalm 34:18 says “The LORD is close to the broken-hearted; He rescues those whose spirits are crushed.” As the Private Office, we condole with you Madame Geingos on your loss of an amazing husband and exceptional leader of our people. It is hard to understand how the two of you could regularly speak on the Presidential Falcon for five hours, which is a demonstration of the solid bond you shared with each other. We condole with the children and the entire family for the

loss of a dedicated father and family patriarch, one you generously gave to serve Namibia and humanity. We are extremely proud of the journey President Hage G. Geingob walked with all of us. His legacy is rich and eternal. Farewell our Scholar President, Dr Hage G. Geingob! May the Humane Soul of President Hage G. Geingob Rest in Eternal Peace. Sit Tibi Terra Levis, President Hage G. Geingob May the Earth Rest Lightly On You, President Hage G. Geingob.

I thank you.



Third First Lady of Namibia Mrs Monica Geingos.

**Tribute by Mrs Monica Geingos, Third First Lady of the Republic of
Namibia, at the Memorial Service of His Excellency, Dr Hage G. Geingob
Saturday, 24 February 2024 Windhoek, Namibia**

Hage loved. And he was loved. The outpouring of grief since his passing is a testament to how deeply he was loved. For us to be joined by so many dignitaries from all over

the world, including so many Presidents, all of whom he regarded as his friends, speaks to his ability to make enduring connections. Hage connected easily to people, and people from all walks of life connected easily to him. I remember being in a holding room, and President Buhari [former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria], who generally appeared soft-spoken, was standing alone and quietly minding his business. Hage walked over to him, and within two minutes, I heard a roar of laughter. I turned around, assuming it was Hage, as he was such a joyful person, but to my surprise, the roar was coming from President Buhari. Hage was quietly giggling next to him — Hage's sincerity had a way of connecting with everyone.

That same sincerity of his has united us in grief from across oceans, throughout the continent, and in every corner of Namibia. Hage, The Internationalist. The pan African. The proud Namibian. The family man. The father to many. The joyful giver. The man who spoke of the Namibian house. A house where we pull together in the same direction, a house with a strong foundation. In mourning Hage, Namibia became everything he wanted us to be. United, law-abiding and pulling in the same direction. In his death, Hage truly came alive. As he transitioned out of the limits set by his earthly body, we also transcended the political, racial, and ethnic boundaries we sometimes impose on ourselves. Hage was dedicated to building an inclusive, united Namibia that lived up to its potential. He was raised as a Namibian and wanted to see the country's integration of cultures, and the lack of tribalism he grew up in. What he wanted for the country, he also wanted for his family -to see the same integration and unity in his blended family of him and me, Mangaliso, Helmut, Nangi, Oshoveli, Dangos, Nino, Junior, Kayla, and his many sons and daughters he took as his own. The love and unity you see in our blended family is a testament to his leadership skills, even at the family level. Hage was our north star; when we looked at him, we knew in which direction to go. He may no longer be with us, but he did leave us a map with clear directions. Many told me they felt lost, orphaned, or fatherless. Some feel like they lost a baobab tree that shielded them from the sun, their protector, defender, and mentor.

I feel the same. I feel like I no longer have my anchor. I feel that if Hage died, what am I doing here? The answer is in Hage's name: Hage means "the one who arrived." Gottfried means "God's friend." And he loved to tell us that the "Gei" in Geingob stands for "big" and that nobody must ever try to reduce him. God's friend arrived on this earth on 03 August 1941. He conquered the BIG things his surname required of him, and when his time was up, he left.

Like Hage, it is up to us to define our purpose and live up to it before our time is up. When you become what your name suggests, it is called normative determinism. Hage was indeed the one who arrived. He arrived on God's time and left on God's time. He did not overstay. Described as a destiny shaper, He contributed significantly to shaping this country's destiny and that of many individuals. Hage was raised by his grandparents, ou Lucia and ou Hans. Like most children raised by old people, Hage was an old soul with a youthful spirit. He called his mother "ousie", which means sister, and it was ou Lucia regarded as his Mother and called "Mama." He told me when he was young that ou Lucia never believed he could do anything wrong. Love was foundational to his high levels of self-confidence. Hage had lots of confidence and courage.

Hage was always a leader. When he joined Twitter in 2014, young people asked him to follow them, and his answer was, "I am a leader, not a follower." He was joking, but you needed to listen carefully to Hage's "jokes" as he often used a joke to soften a hard truth.

Hage was indeed a leader, not a follower. He marched to the beat of his own drums. Like a true leader, he spent political capital on issues that he knew were for the greater good in the long term, even if it was unpopular in the short term. I have always admired his ability to understand complex problems quickly. While others found a problem for

every solution, Hage always found a solution for every problem. He was such a good problem solver that often, he would turn into a casual conversation into a solution-finding exercise.

Remember I said he was an old soul with a youthful spirit; at 19, Hage was a teacher when being a teacher was simultaneously a respected community leader. You immediately became a church elder, taught Sunday school, and commanded respect. He always laughed at how he had to counsel married couples when he barely knew anything about relationships. Another leadership experience he always narrated was how, on his way into exile, he had the privilege of meeting and being guided by Chief Hosea Kutako. A meeting that he always spoke about as an immense privilege and which I suspect drove his desire to build a shrine to enhance the knowledge of current and future generations about Hosea Kutako. Hage was not only a leader, but he was generous in recognising the leadership of others.

I digress. We all heard his eulogy; Hage was always in a position of power. Whether as a teacher, young man, or President much later in life. With the full confidence of President Nujoma, Hage has wielded power for most of his life. For a powerful man, Hage was very humble. But like all powerful men, he was also very complex. But within his complexity was simplicity, authenticity, consistency and vulnerability. This is what made him a people's person. He had a heart for people, and people had a heart for him.

I would like to thank his brother, the President of the Republic of Namibia, for giving him a hero's funeral. I would also like to thank all of you for giving him a send-off befitting of a hero. My husband was an honest man. A man who spoke his mind, even when it was inconvenient. He is blunt when discussing third terms and leaders who overstay their welcome. In reflection, Hage and I were informed by doctors on 16

January 2024 that he had cancer, after a biopsy. We went to our first oncology visit on the 17th of January 2024 to devise a treatment plan, and on 19th of January, he released a press statement notifying the public he had cancer. Did he know how long he had to live? The answer is no, he didn't. His passing was traumatising and unexpected. He was eager to retire — we had such plans. However, and true to his word, he didn't overstay. In the last few months, he spoke often about ensuring a smooth transition. And even though he left too early, the transition was smooth — it was just not the transition he thought it would be. His concern about abrupt departures always centred around smooth transition and ensuring no power vacuums were created. The country swore in a new president on the same day he passed away, and there was no power struggle.

We should be proud of ourselves and our political leadership, both from the governing party and the opposition. If ever there was a display of political maturity, it was in that moment. Long may it continue.

Many people can tell you where and what they were doing when they heard that Hage Geingob was no more. I will tell you where I was. I was at his side, shocked to the deepest part of my core that someone so full of life, so full of love, had taken his last breath.

Death will humble you. We are not called by our maker when it is convenient for us or those who love us. We are called when the Lord so decides. It has been raining since Hage passed away. Yesterday, when his coffin was outside the door [at Casa Rosalia], the sun appeared from behind the clouds and shone straight on his coffin. When I walked back into the house and sat down, the clouds had returned, and there was a rainbow. These things do not happen by coincidence. Hage was not an ordinary person. Hage's passing is a reminder to all of us to be prepared. I was not ready to lose Hage.

From the massive outpouring of collective grief, it does not appear that anyone was. Hage wore his heart on his sleeve, and in response, the country wept. The scenes we saw yesterday were heart-breaking and heartwarming in equal measure. A nation united in grief but celebrating their departed President.

Hage's transparency has helped us in more ways than one. Because he spoke to us so often about his preferences regarding his legacy and expectations from us as his immediate family, it was easy to reach a consensus on key decisions. Please go and update your will, and speak to your family about your preferences should death knock unexpectedly. Funeral arrangements and decisions surrounding them are made by people who are all grieving, and relationships can be tested. I want to thank my blended family and the extended relatives of the Geingob family for passing this very difficult relationship test.

Since the morning of 04 January 2024, a dull ache settled into my stomach and has remained there to date. Grief unleashes anarchy in your system as your mind, emotions, and body do as they please, when they please. One moment, you are walking and talking, and the next moment, you are gasping for air as a wave of intense sadness washes over you. When we lose someone we love, we lose a piece of ourselves; the closer you are, the bigger the piece. Hage gave so much of himself that we all had a piece of him, so may we all be consoled.

Hage's brothers, Peter Katjavivi, President Mbumba, and his sister, First Lady Sustjie Mbumba, have been with us since this nightmare started and have not left our side since. The piece they lost of Hage was big, and despite their grief, they focused on keeping us whole. Sustjie sat with me at the hospital during the day and brought me soup in the evening as the children reported to her that I was not eating. Many years ago, she told me that if ever I was in trouble with Hage, which was often, I should say,

"Ou Hageba Axaba." One day, I found myself in trouble and said, "Ai, ou hageba axaba." He laughed so hard he forgot what he was annoyed about and asked me if Sustjie or Bience put me up to this. He then told me that next time I want to escape consequences, I should say, "Ou hageba KAI axaba."

The Vice President, Her Excellency Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah, also saved me. When I got back from the morgue, I walked into the house for the first time as a widow, and the abyss immediately tried to swallow me. She lifted me from the floor where I had fallen and spoke to me in a stern, reassuring and compassionate voice. She prevented me from sinking deeper into the darkness that constantly lurks. That is the leadership we have in this country. There was an old man on TV, crying, saying he needed to travel to Windhoek to bury his President. As I watched, I cried with him. What can I say to all of you? Namibians and non-Namibians all over the world have mourned Hage like he was theirs. In many ways, he was. Hage never wanted to be owned. He belonged to all of us. He accepted that, and as a family, we accepted that, too. I am not the same person I was before this nightmare started. I am not even sure who I am without Hage's constant love. All I know is that I see many things very differently now. We all should. We [the country] came to a near emotional standstill, and perhaps this is the time to press the reset button on how we relate to each other as individuals, families and citizens. Death brought us together, no matter our differences, and it is love; our shared love for this country will keep us together. There is a duality to love and grief. Love is replaced by grief, and grief is replaced by love. We mourn because we loved. I saw many broken people, particularly those who worked with Hage. The pain was deep because the connection was equally deep. I have not ruled out seeking mental health support to cope, and I would encourage anybody who is struggling to shake off the feelings of sadness and loss to do the same.

Hage's ordeal put me in the front row of the devastating impact of cancer. It also required that I spend a lot of time with many incredible Namibian doctors in the last few weeks. All of the doctors I interacted with are concerned about the rising cases of cancer in Namibia, in what appears to be a global phenomenon. A few mentioned that they were pleased to see an increase in men looking to be screened for cancer once the President announced he had cancer. The WHO recently announced a frightening projection of a rise of 77% in cancer cases by the year 2050. If anyone is watching megatrends in public healthcare, cancer care, particularly the inequities that define it, should be a priority focus area; it certainly will be for me. I want to thank all the healthcare workers who helped us during this difficult period. Everyone went over and above the call of duty. To the staff in the presidency, Casa Rosalia, the private office, security, medical and protocol, all we can do is thank you for the love you showed and continue to show our beloved Hage, and us as a family. I greatly respect how you continue to perform your duties despite your grief. This extends to all of the dignitaries present today and everyone who has mourned Hage; the singing and celebration of his life has comforted us. We are sure that Hage was loved and that, through our collective memories, he will live forever. President Nujoma, President Pohamba. We love you! We will not wait until you leave us to tell you how important you are and that you are our heroes. Hage was because you were. Even though Hage has left us, The legacy continues. Hage. You defined love. You were loved by all of us. Nothing will ever be the same without you. The people's President. My President. My Husband, My best friend. You were born a peasant and died a president. Rest in power, August.

Dolapo Aina's Tribute

I commenced this long piece with a question. Where were you when you heard about the death of President Hage G. Geingob of Namibia on February 4th, 2024? I was getting ready and preparing to attend church service in Kigali, Rwanda. Considering that I had been following President Geingob's health status since the last week of

January 2024 when the Presidency revealed the President's condition and his subsequent trip to the United States of America; like everyone else, I was of the opinion that President Geingob would get better. Alas, the sudden news on that fateful Sunday. Like everyone else, I was so certain the President would pull through that I sent in a letter requesting for an interview (later on in 2024 to talk about his life after office et al) to the Office of the Presidency ahead of President Geingob's recovery. Alas, the sudden news of President Geingob's demise.

On Saturday, the 24th of February 2024, I spent the large part of my Saturday watching people line up the streets from Parliament Gardens to Robert Mugabe Avenue, Sam Nuyoma drive; as the casket carrying the late President of Namibia; Dr Hage G. Geingob made a vehicular procession to the independence stadium in Windhoek.

Namibians loved their President and you could see it from people who came out in their thousands to pay their last respects to their beloved President. He was truly the people's President. A man whom I knew from the first interaction was all about punctuality even when he granted me my best interview till date. He regaled me with historical happenings which were not only stories to him because he knew the actors on a personal level. I knew I had met more than my match when it comes to Pan Africanism and stories when he told me of stories of Castro, Che Guevara etc. From the global perspective, America and Africa were the regions to be in the 1960s and he saw it all as he was in the thick of things in that era. I came out of the State House in Windhoek realising I had interacted with an African witness of historical events in Africa and America, Latin and Central Americas. A sincere man. An internationalist. A Pan Africanist. When you met and spoke with the President, the connection is always deep.

That day, I left State House in Windhoek, went back to the venue of the event I was to attend and, in the evening, I did a lot of research on some of the things he told me

to research on which was about his Nigerian mentor of 40 years, Professor Adebayo Adedeji. Professor Adedeji was the Under- Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) from 1975 to 1991. Speaking of Nigeria and President Geingob's excellent memory, when I realised his strong connection to Nigeria, I remember during our conversation, I asked him if he knew some prominent diplomats whom I knew personally like Ambassador Olusegun Olusola who was Nigeria's Ambassador to Ethiopia in the 1980s. He remembered him. Same response to Professor Bolaji Akinyemi but a faint recollection of General Ike Nwachukwu. Both were Nigeria's Foreign Affairs Ministers in the 1980s and 1990s.

Liverpool FC defeated Chelseas FC to win the EPL Cup on the same day President Geingob was being buried. The President was a strong supporter of Liverpool as I got to know during my interview with him. Considering African countries like Rwanda have partnerships with some football clubs, I asked during our conversation before the interview why cannot Namibia do likewise since The Land of The Brave had vast array of tourism locations. President Geingob replied that President Paul Kagame was on a State Visit in August 2019 and had been seen the beautiful country. President Geingob's response to my question of sports cum country branding was that there would be an uproar in Namibia by Namibians. This made me realise the myriad of complexities faced by African Presidents steering their citizens for the collective good of the country.

Sitting down with President Hage G. Geingob and discussing at length, I remember the joke he cracked when he walked in. He stated; "You are a very tall man and taller than me. I don't grant interviews to people taller than me." I wasn't expecting that joke which got everyone in stitches. My response was that I was still getting taller. I remember I had to inform him about his impeccable dress sense complete with pocket square, President Geingob smiled and complimented me too. I remember what struck me when I came out of the State House was that leadership is not a tea party.

Presidents of Governments go through a lot which they don't usually divulge to the public and their citizens. They carry that burden and usually keep sealed lips. My circa two-hour interaction with President Hage Geingob, I came to see the responsibilities of being an African President from a different perspective thereafter. He was a Pan African storyteller and orator with receipts (as Generation Zs would say).

During my interview with President Geingob, my final question to him was; "What is the title of the book you are currently reading?" His response commenced with his trademark infectious laugh and he went on to inform me that he was writing a book on a collection of subject matters.

My hope is that his book would be published and the world would have more than a glimpse into the brilliant mind of President Hage Geingob of Namibia. A President whose untimely demise revealed Namibia's democracy. A seamless transition of governance. A beacon of democracy.

Watching the ceremonial route procession entourage of military vehicles (High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles aka Humvees) drive through the roads of Windhoek, and seeing the camera angle of the national broadcaster NBC which focused on the military vehicle towing the casket draped in the flag of Namibia, as an African who met Namibia's President Geingob and who was welcomed into his office and felt welcomed, chatted, spoke and interviewed the President; at 1.04pm on that Saturday, I had to raise my hand for a 2 minute salute and thereafter looked for some tissue papers. The side view angle of the NBC camera of the military Humvee and the casket was very poignant and would remain embedded in my memory (not an image I would share).

Those who knew President Hage G. Geingob personally or met him during the time he spent on this earth and to those whom he decided to pour wisdom (Presidential,

fatherly, diplomatic or Pan-African) into; they never remain the same. You are awakened with a lifelong responsibility and you know what it is. Like former First Lady Monica Geingos said, President Geingob left a clear road map for his family and nation. Those who met him and spoke with him extensively would know they were also given a road map.

To all those who would visit Namibia in the near future, I would implore you to pay your respects by visiting the Heroes' Acre which is an official war memorial of the Republic of Namibia. Built into the uninhabited hills ten kilometres south of the city centre of Windhoek. This is the final resting place of Namibia's President Hage Gottfried Geingob.

May his gentle soul rest in peace. Amen.



First Lady Monica Geingob
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AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF
THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION
CONFEDERATION
[https://ituc-africa.org/The-passing-of-
President-Hage-Geingob-A-Crusader-of-the-
African-cause.html](https://ituc-africa.org/The-passing-of-President-Hage-Geingob-A-Crusader-of-the-African-cause.html)

The passing of President Hage Geingob A Crusader of the African cause

President Geingob was a towering figure in Namibia's history. His political journey was one marked by resilience, dedication, and an unyielding commitment to the ideals of freedom and justice.

As a fervent Pan-Africanist, President Geingob spent significant years of his life as a freedom fighter in exile, contributing to the struggle for the independence of Namibia. His return from exile marked a pivotal moment in the nation's history, and he went on to become its 3rd president, guiding the country through crucial periods of development and change. President Geingob's frank and unwavering approach to addressing issues garnered respect not only within Namibia but across the African continent. His leadership style reflected a genuine passion for the well-being of his people and a tireless dedication to fostering unity.

As we mourn the loss of this remarkable leader, let us remember and celebrate the indomitable spirit with which President Geingob served Namibia. His legacy will endure as an inspiration to current and future generations, reminding us of the importance of resilience, solidarity, and the pursuit of a just society.

In this time of grief, the International Trade Union Confederation - Africa (ITUC-Africa) stands in solidarity with the trade unions of Namibia through TUCNA and with the entire workforce and citizenry. May President Hage Geingob's contributions be forever etched in the collective memory of a grateful nation. We pray that the immediate family of the deceased and the Namibian people be comforted, and they will find the strength to continue the nation-building efforts.

With heartfelt sympathy and solidarity,
Akhatior Joel ODIGIE
General Secretary
Issued on the 5th of February 2024.

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